

Mayor Scott Avedisian will tour the newly reconstructed Animal Shelter on Arthur Devine Boulevard tomorrow at 9:30 a.m. Shelter Director Ann Corvin, staff and volunteers began moving dogs in the city's care back into the facility, which was under eight feet of water during the March flood, today. Cats will be moved back next week.

Because of the extent of the damage from contaminated river water, the entire facility had to be completely gutted and disinfected. Reconstruction work was divided between New England Building Company Inc., which was hired by the city's insurer, and city crews under the supervision of Maintenance Director Joe Blake, and included rebuilding walls, installing new ceilings, flooring, energy-efficient lights and fixtures. New, upgraded plumbing, electrical and fire alarm systems have all been installed as well, as to meet current codes.

The floods displaced 34 cats and 16 dogs, all of which were placed in temporary foster homes. Happily, some animals have found permanent homes as a result of these placements, but many will return to the shelter to await adoption, like "Percy," a 10-year-old lab mix who has been waiting for 8 months for a new home.

All on-site records were destroyed; however, the facility has resumed issuing dog licenses. Residents can stop by the shelter during normal business hours to obtain them.

An outpouring of support from individuals, business and the Friends of the Warwick Animal Shelter has helped staff to replenish some supplies. Nevertheless, donations of food, bedding, cat litter, treats and cleaning products are always welcome and can be dropped off during regular business hours. The shelter has several fundraisers throughout the year and a poster on "Petfinder.com." Corvin said residents are welcome to join and/or participate in their efforts.

For more information about adopting, dog licenses, donating or volunteering at the shelter, please call 468-4377.